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Program to focus on agriculture implements during Dust Bowl era

CHARLESTON — Eastern Illinois University history professor Debra Reid will present "Illinois Plows and Breaking the Plains: Technology, Ecology and Agricultural Production during the 1930s" at 4 p.m. Feb. 3 in Witters Conference Room 4440, Booth Library.

"The bulk of agricultural implements used on the Plains in the years leading up to the Dust Bowl were made in Illinois-based manufacturing," Reid said. "The Peoria-based firm Caterpillar even got free advertising in the 1940 film, 'The Grapes of Wrath,' when the 1935 RD-8 roared through the load farm."

This program will examine

these Illinois perspectives on the Dust Bowl and others, including concern about dust pneumonia and changing New Deal policy that made the corn-hog reduction program obsolete but replaced it with an emphasis on soil conservation and terracing.

Reid's program is one of many planned in conjunction with "Dust, Drought, and Dreams Gone Dry," a national traveling exhibition about the causes and aftermath of the historic Dust Bowl period, which is now on display at Booth Library, EIU. The exhibit will continue through Feb. 26.

The public is invited to view the exhibit any time the library

is open, and a variety of lectures, film screenings and programs are planned. More information and a complete schedule of events are available at <http://library.eiu.edu/exhibits/dustbowl/>.